Stability and Support Operations at the Turn of the Century--1899

EDITOR'S NOTE: Today's stability and support operations resemble many of the operations short of war that our Army has had to perform throughout our history. The infantryman has always been in the forefront of such contingencies, and soldiers thus deployed have served in the knowledge that with little or no warning they could be called upon to employ force of arms. This was as true a century ago as it is today. This article illustrates the importance of constant alertness and shows how well-trained, disciplined infantrymen can overcome a treacherous, implacable enemy, even against overwhelming odds.

We are indebted to Mr. Walter James Bertholf, whose diary gives us this first-hand account of the Balangiga Massacre and subsequent events. Walter Bertholf returned to the United States several months after the action, and was discharged from the service on March 20, 1902. After a long and successful life, he died on March 18, 1964.

I want to thank Mr. David P. Perrine, a retired Army officer, for his invaluable assistance in the research and preparation of this article. Mr. Perrine is presently completing a book on the experiences of Company C, 9th U.S. Infantry Regiment, during the Spanish-American War era, including its service in the Philippines and China.

In October 1898 the war with Spain had been over for about two months, but the natives of the Philippines were becoming belligerent, and trouble seemed to be brewing for the small force of American soldiers holding the islands.

The forces there were all State Volunteers who had enlisted for the Spanish-American War. This war having been brought to a successful ending, these men were entitled to be mustered out, but first they had to be relieved by members of the Regular Army.

On October 22, 1898, I was 19 years old and eager to join the service and see the world. When my father refused his consent, I took it upon myself and enlisted, giving my age as 21. I enlisted in Battery C, Sixth U.S. Artillery, and was sent the same day to Fort McHenry at Baltimore, Maryland. After a week there, I was sent to my battery at Fort Caswell, North Carolina.

In December 1898 the trouble in the Philippines seemed to be over, and it was decided to reduce the Army by several thousand men—all men who had enlisted between April 21 and November 1, 1898 could receive their discharges on request. As this outfit was a heavy battery doing duty as Coast Guard, it seemed unlikely that it would ever be moved to another post, and, as the Infantry was being sent to the Philippines to relieve the Volunteers—and my greatest desire was to get over there—I requested my discharge and secured it on January 20.

I returned to my home in Watkins, New York, and on February 10 went to Syracuse and reenlisted in C Company, 9th U.S. Infantry, and was sent the next day to Fort Ontario at Oswego, New York, to join my company. I remained there until March 17 when we entrained for San Francisco and the Philippines. We were a week crossing the country. On March 28, 1899, six companies of the 9th went aboard an old horse ship, the *Zealandia*, en route to Manila. We landed in Manila April 26.

The second night we were in Manila we were marched out to Pateros, a small town about 18 miles inland. We garrisoned this town and had a night attack, on the second night we were there, in which one man was killed. We remained there until June 9 and then went into the Battle of Guadaloupe Ridge. We fought several hours in the intense tropical heat and had several cases of sunstroke. (We were still wearing the winter clothing we wore in Ontario and were in the tropics two months before we drew tropical clothing.)

We got the Filipinos on the run about noon that day and then pursued them about six miles to Ford de Las Penas, where they made another stand. They were well entrenched, and our company was greatly reduced in size due to the sunstroke. As there were only 19 of us left out of 110 men in my company, we had quite a time capturing the trenches, taking two hours and losing two men wounded. We were under the command of Captain Charles Noyes.

On June 13 we advanced south about eight miles and stopped at the Zapote River. On the south bank of this river, the Filipinos had heavy trenches and only one bridge. The river was deep and unfordable and we had to capture this bridge or build one. The 21st Infantry got the job of capturing the bridge while we in the 9th built a bamboo foot bridge down the river about a mile. This was one of the hardest fights the Filipinos put up during the entire campaign. We had one man wounded but none killed in our company, but the 21st lost quite a few, both killed and wounded, and we were all day taking the position.

On June 17 we were transferred to the 2d Division, 8th Army Corps, or what we called the North Firing Line under General Arthur MacArthur (father of Douglas MacArthur). We were stationed at San Fernando and Santo Tomas from June 18 to August 9, then advanced, fought a hard fight, and captured Santa Rita. We were there until September 28 and advanced and captured Porac, then on to Angeles. We remained there until October, and during that time had 11 night attacks, some of them very severe.

In November we again advanced to Tarlac, fighting at Bamban Bridge, Capas, and Mabalacat. We stayed at Mabalacat Christmas day when we returned to Bamban and were there until June 1900 without firing a shot.

On June 18 we received orders to pack up and return to Manila. We remained in Manila a week then embarked for China via Japan, as the Boxers were getting out of control in China. We arrived in Taku, China, on July 9 and took barges up to the Pei-ho River 30 miles to Tien Tsin. We were under fire the last few miles, the Chinese taking pot shots at us. We had no one hit, but it was uncomfortable being shot at and not being able to see where the shots were coming from or to return fire.

On July 13 the Allied forces—English, Russian Japanese, Italian, and American—fought the battle of Tien Tsin. The Chinese were behind the Great Wall of Tien Tsin and we were out in the open. This was the hardest fight the Chinese put up, and we were the better part of two days capturing the

city. There were only eight companies of Americans in this fight, 428 men, and out of this force 108 were killed or wounded. Our Colonel Liscum was killed, and five other officers were wounded. My company had three men killed and 12 wounded. I got through without a scratch but had a number of close shaves that still give me chills when I think of them.

On August 4 we started the advance on Pekin, the 5th we had a battle at Pietsang, 6th Yang Stun, 9th Ho-Si-Wu, all hard fights, and on the 15th captured Pekin. On this advance we lost our ration train and were unable to get anything to eat for two days except green watermelons and nubbins of green corn. The Americans also lost five more men killed, one killed and one wounded out of my company.

We returned to Ho-Si-Wu and garrisoned this town until November. About a week after our return, Lieutenant Waldron, our second officer, was shot through the hand and sent back to Tien Tsin to a hospital, and I was detailed to return with him to take care of him. We had to go by river in a small junk—a three-day trip—and on the way down I was stricken with typhoid fever. I was unconscious on arrival and was confined to the hospital for five weeks. After being discharged, I rejoined my company, which had been returned to Tien Tsin, where we remained until June 1, 1901. We were sent to Tongku at the harbor of Tien Tsin, were we remained until the end of June, when we were returned to the Philippines.

We did guard duty in Manila for two months and then went in August to Samar. For years, Samar had been the hunting ground of piratical Moros and Sulu chiefs, and a system of smuggling had also been carried on by the Visayans, the tribe who inhabit Samar.

When the Spaniards came to Samar, they cautiously sent on ahead their priests, who soon dominated the natives by playing on their superstitions. The army of Spain, however, was never represented on Samar except by a few small garrisons under the command of a sergeant, who had been instructed to marry, if possible, the daughter of the most influential man in the town and thus secure a faction that might save him from assassination. They never attempted to penetrate the interior, being content with a few garrisons along the coast.

In Samar, the insurgents were under the command of General Vincente Lukban, Aguinaldo's most trusted lieutenant. The insurgents easily eluded our troops, and owing to the wild, impassable nature of the country, maintained a kind of brigand warfare. They divided into small detachments in the interior, avoiding our men, except where they could ambush or trap them. Towns were occasionally fired upon, and a few fanatical attacks were made upon small scouting details.

Although the people in the seaport town were inclined to be peaceful, Lukban and his forces kept everything in disorder. Many expeditions were sent out to capture him but without success, and no native dared to divulge his whereabouts.

About 30 miles from the south end of the island, on the west coast, was Balangiga, a small village of about 300 inhabitants and the usual collection of thatched huts, or nipa palm shacks, a church and convent, and a cuartel, or barracks. Here, C Company landed—consisting of Captain Thomas W. Connell, First Lieutenant Edward A. Bumpus, Major (Dr.) R.S. Griswold, and about 70 men. The village leader, the chief of police, and the priest met us out in the harbor in native barotas (hollowed out logs with bamboo poles suspended from side to side to keep the boat upright), carrying the American flag. They turned the convent over to the officers as quarters and the cuartel and four nipa shacks to the men. They showed us every courtesy possible.

To those who have never been in the tropics, it is hard to picture the difficulties our troops had to contend with in subduing the insurgents. The interior of Samar is a dense jungle of rank tropical growth, immense mountain gorges, deep and rapid streams, and widespread rice and mango swamps. The enemy had placed spring traps and pitfalls along all trails, and woe to the soldier who was unfortunate enough to spring one. The intense heat of the tropical sun, fever, and the treacherous character of the natives added to our hardships. Often, while marching along a trail, watching carefully each step in fear of springing a trap, some poor soldier would fall, stabbed to death by an insurgent who had been concealed in the dense undergrowth and who could rarely ever be reached and seldom ever seen.

Our company had been in the town a few weeks when Captain Connell, in order to check the spread of cholera, ordered the village leader and the chief of police to have each villager clear away the garbage and filth piled under his hut. The native shacks were built of bamboo, four legs being set upright in the ground and the floor being fastened to these posts about six feet above the ground. The sides and roofs were made of nipa leaves, and it was reached by means of a bamboo ladder.

The order to clean up was translated into the Visayan language and posted in various places about the town by the President. But this order was not obeyed, so a second order followed, with the same results, and also a third. Captain Connell added in the third bulletin that unless this order was obeyed, he would have the town burned.

The city staff—which consisted of the village leader, the priest, and a police force of some seven or eight men—claimed they could not force the villagers to comply with the order and asked for help. Accordingly, one day about sundown, the captain turned out the company, surrounded the town, and brought in every man over 18 years of age. He then picked out 80 of the most able-bodied and held them prisoners, placing them in two Sibley tents a few yards from the guardhouse, and placed a guard over them. The remainder of the townspeople were released with the promise that they would return for work in the morning, which they did.

Each morning about ten of these men, under guard of one of the soldiers, would clean the street. At the same time, those not under arrest were cleaning up around their shacks. The natives gathered around the guardhouse every morning under the supervision of the native chief of police. Being able to speak Spanish, he acted as interpreter between the soldiers and the natives, and through his suggestion the force

of laborers was gradually increased.

None of us had even an inkling that a murderous plot was being hatched. On September 26, the chief of police and the village leader made a suggestion to the captain: Since Balangiga was the headquarters of the various small towns surrounding it, and since it was necessary for the natives to work out their taxes, they should be brought into Balangiga and allowed to do the work there. The captain thought this plan quite reasonable and consented, not thinking what the chief's real intentions were.

The chief accordingly went out into the mountains and brought in 40 husky natives. We turned 40 of the town people loose, placed these men in the tents, and made the town people promise they would return in the morning. The next day the chief again went out and returned with 40 more men. These 80 men now under guard were some of Lukban's best troops of bolo men [*the bolo is a long, heavy, single-edged machete*], and had enough cutlery concealed on their persons to stock a small hardware store.

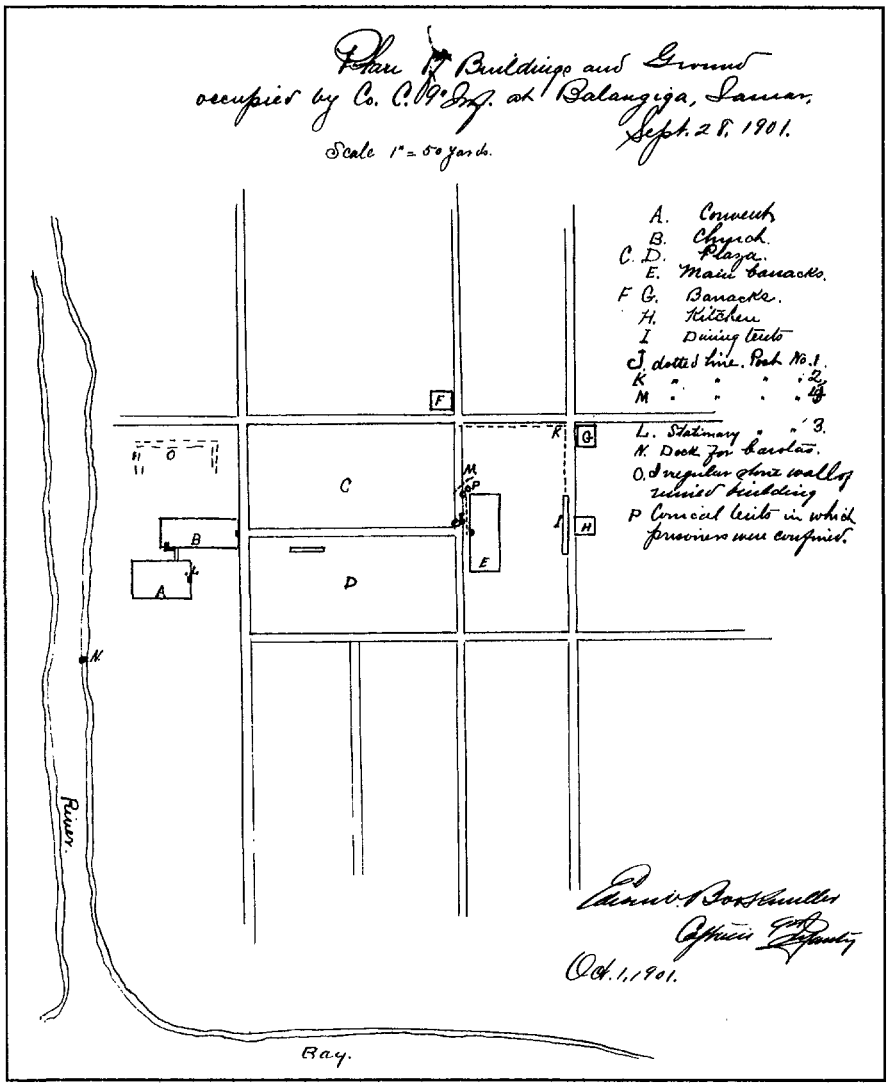
In the center of the town was a plaza, or square, on opposite sides of which were the church and convent, connected by a covered passageway, and the quarters of the men. The cuartel sheltered about 50 men, and the rest were in small shacks.

The company kitchen and mess tent were behind the cuartel, and the small shacks were adjacent to it. I was assigned to duty as officers' cook, their Chinese cook having refused to leave Manila with us. (He evidently knew the character of the natives better than we did.) I was therefore quartered in the convent with the officers. They occupied a front room and I a rear room, my kitchen being on the opposite side of a hall between the two rooms.

The company was divided into four groups—the officers on one side of the square, the main quarters under Acting First Sergeant Randles, shack No. 1 under Sergeant Markley, and shack No. 2 under Sergeant Betron. The guardhouse was in the basement of the large quarters and the two Sibley tents with the native prisoners were only a few yards away.

On the 24th, Lieutenant Bumpus, with six men, made a trip by barota to Basey for the mail and supplies. He returned about 10:00 p.m. of the 27th and delivered the mail upon arrival.

This was the last mail most of my comrades were ever to receive, and most of it remained unread; because we were issued only half a candle a month, most of the men had saved their mail for the next morning. I was a little better situated than the rest, as I had an oil lamp and was able to read all of my letters.



Map of the the town of Balangiga, drawn by Captain Edwin Bookmiller, Commander of G Company, 9th Infantry, who commanded the relief force on the return to Balangiga.

In a battle such as the one that followed, one has not much chance to look around and see what others are doing but is always on the alert to find the enemy. For that reason, I state here only what I did, but I also include reports made by three others.

That night was still and dark, and we could hear soft chanting in the church but thought it was some kind of religious service. About midnight, one of the guards reported that the women and children were leaving town; why the Sergeant of the Guard did not notify the company commander of this, I cannot understand.

About 60 natives remained in the church all night, ready to rush upon us in the convent, they being separated from us only by two folding doors. At 6:30 in the morning of the 28th, the natives were gathering for the day's work, and many were lounging around the plaza, bolos in hand. The prisoners were grouped near the tents within a few feet of a pile of bolos.

We always carried our rifles loaded, except to mess. When we bathed, only ten men at a time were allowed to go, and five of these had to remain on shore and guard. The mess call for breakfast was sounded at 6:30, the men assembling in the mess tent without their rifles. One man was always left in each of the quarters as a guard. We

never doubted that, however strong an attack, we would be able to reach our rifles.

I rose about six and proceeded to cook breakfast for the officers. My servant was a Filipino boy whom we had brought from Manila, and to whom I owe the fact that I am here now, as he gave me the first warning. I had my fire kindled and fresh water in. I had noticed nothing unusual except that the native who brought me eggs every morning had failed to put in an appearance, but I thought very little of that.

About 5:30 I heard the church bell suddenly peal out and about the same time heard a strange noise in the passageway between the church and the convent. The building shook, but I did not think seriously about this either, because we had experienced several earthquakes. My servant shouted, "Run, cook, run!" I ran to the door and was confronted by a husky native, bolo in hand. I dodged to get by him, he at the same time making a slash at my head. He hit the door casing, which warded off the worst of the blow, but he still cut a two-inch gash in the back of my head.

I had to run 60 or 70 feet to get to my rifle, and had to dodge several natives to do so. I managed to get by them without a single wound, the big native who had first attacked me following me and hacking at, but not reaching, me. I reached my rifle, which was loaded, and turned around. The man had raised his bolo to give me a finishing blow, but sticking the muzzle of my rifle right in his face—well, enough said. He did not hit me or anyone else again.

Private Walter Bertholf, with the Krag-Jorgensen that saved his life.

The rest of the natives, except the three or four who were after me, were in the front room attacking the officers. When my shot rang out, several more joined those who were attacking me. I shot the nearest one, leaped from the window onto the roof of a small building adjoining the convent, and then dropped to the ground. I still had four shots left in my rifle but—not having had time to hook my cartridge belt

Statement from Musician Meyer

I sounded mess call at 6:30 and then went unarmed to the mess tent. Nearly all of our men were in the mess tent eating. I, with Corporal Burke and about 12 mess mates, had just sat down to eat. Looking around, I noticed the chief of police, accompanied by some of his followers, walk from the vicinity of the main quarters toward a sentinel who was on guard over the mess tent. As he passed, he snatched the rifle from the sentinel and fired into the mess tent, wounding one man. The natives who were in the church rushed in, killing the officers and guard. The prisoners rushed out, grabbing their working bolos, and guarded the door of the main barracks, slashing down every man who came along. There was a succession of shouts, the tower bells rang out, and the crowd of natives, headed by the chief of police, ran toward us with the evident intention of cutting us off from our weapons in the barracks.

For a moment we were too dazed to move. Someone shouted, "They are in on us—get your rifles, boys." Instinctively, we all dashed for the front of our shack, the natives close behind, slashing and stabbing. We bounded up the ladder into the main room, the natives right after us. A fearful hand-to-hand struggle ensued, with soldiers and natives in death grips for the possession of rifles and bolos, and blood flowing in streams from the floor of the hut.

I reached the place where my revolver was and raised my right hand to grasp it when I received a terrible blow on the arm from a club in the hand of a large native, which numbed my forearm. I raised the other arm and was stabbed in the hand. Right after this, I received a stab in the ribs and a cut on the head. Unable to reach my revolver, and believing my last hour had come, I grasped the big native around the middle, pinioning his arms to his sides, and together we rolled about on the floor.

Near me were Corporal Burke and the chief of police, both giants in stature and pretty evenly matched, and both fighting as only giants can. I was losing strength from loss of blood and had about given up all hope when a shot rang out close beside me. I turned my head and saw the chief of police lying dead on the floor and Burke standing over him with a smoking revolver. In rolling about on the floor, they had turned over the cot belonging to the hospital corpsman, and his revolver had fallen out in reach of Burke. He had grasped the revolver and killed the policeman and then my opponent. I jumped up, got possession of my revolver and commenced pumping lead into our attackers. Just then, a few more men succeeded in getting rifles, and the natives ran out on the plaza. In a few minutes, seven of us were firing on the enemy.

The scene was awful, the dead and dying everywhere. We heard shots from Sergeant Markley's shack, and he soon joined us. I saw Private DeGraffenried, a great big fellow, standing on a pile of rocks and holding back several natives by hurling rocks at them. Markley gave him a rifle and all three joined our party. Hearing a cry for help, we ran in the direction of the convent. All of the officers were dead, but we found Corporal Hickman, Private Bertholf, and the native boy servant fighting off a horde of natives with but one rifle between them.

on—had left the building without it. As I struck the ground, four natives, all armed with bolos, made a dash at me. I fired, hitting the nearest one, but only wounding him. He gave an awful yelp and fell to the ground. I think his yelling put more fear into the others than my shot, for they stopped, looked at him, and turned and fled.

Just at this time, Captain Connell had leaped from the front window and came running past the corner of the building, followed by several natives. I fired at them, killing one, but could not save the captain, as they were upon him and had given him his death wound before I could fire another shot. I heard a noise behind me and turned, about to fire my last shot, when to my great relief I saw my servant running toward me with my cartridge belt and bayonet. I reloaded my rifle and commenced firing at natives wherever I saw them.

I saw Private Kleinhampl running across the plaza, closely pursued by a native. I fired and dropped the native but Kleinhampl had already been so badly wounded that he soon died.

I have often been asked whether I was ever frightened during this time, and I answer by relating the following incident:

To those of you who have never handled a Krag, the magazine holds five cartridges and one in the chamber, making six shots. By means of a small lever on the side of the magazine, the magazine may be cut out and the rifle loaded through the chamber only, in this manner keeping the magazine in reserve. It occasionally happens that after firing a shot, one forgets about his magazine being cut in, slips a shell from his belt into the chamber, and shoves the bolt home—the result being that a shell works up from the magazine and jams. The only way to overcome this is to remove all the shells from the magazine, and to a man in the state of mind we were in, it is a frenzied moment.

I saw two natives running toward me. I had just fired and loaded my rifle from the belt, and I shoved my bolt home and caused a jam. I pointed my rifle at them, and they ran behind a building. Little did they know that my rifle was temporarily useless.

Up until this time, I had heard no shots fired around the main quarters and supposed that all the fighting was on our side of the plaza. I saw some of the men and shouted for them to come over and help. Little did I realize the awful fight they were having until Corporal Hickman joined me. He had no rifle, only belt and bayonet, but had escaped. (I learned later that he had gone up to my room and was looking at a newspaper I had received in the mail when he heard them and escaped by leaping from a window.)

I kept firing at every native I saw and not long afterward was joined by Sergeant Markley and two others. We went up into the officers' quarters where we found all the guard dead. Lieutenant Bumpus was sitting up against the wall, dead. Dr. Griswold had fallen just as he leaped from his bed. Captain Connell lay dead on the ground below.

When the bells rang, every man made a rush for his quarters, but the attacks had been well planned and a force of natives guarded every entrance. At the rear of and adjoining the main barracks was a small annex, access to which was by means of a bamboo ladder. Some ten or twelve of the men drove the natives away from the ladder and made a rush for it, but their combined weight broke the ladder, and they dropped in a confused mass on the ground below. The natives were upon them and killed every man before they could put up any defense.

Those who attempted to get in the main entrance were also boloed. Three of the men ran down and jumped in the bay and attempted to swim away, but two of them met the same fate as the rest. After we had cleared the plaza and officers' quarters of natives, we went over to the main quarters. There

Statement of Sergeant Markley

I was on duty and not yet relieved at breakfast, so I stayed in the shack. I stood in the doorway looking around and called to Private Cain to hurry and get back so I could get some breakfast. As he started to come toward my shack, I went to meet him, not waiting until he was all the way there.

I noticed a lot of natives around the guard tents and in front of the main quarters and a great many on the streets. As I passed Cain I told him the natives were back early that day and went in to breakfast. I was just holding my plate to get my breakfast from Cook Walls when I heard a yell and the church bells ring.

I was rather suspicious of the natives there anyway and seemed to know at once that this meant an attack. I yelled, "Get your rifles, boys!" I ran to my shack, and when I got past the mess tent, the whole place seemed to swarm with natives. Near my shack was a big native armed with a club. He started to hit me with it, but I threw my tin cup in his face and went by. As I got to the steps, I saw a native with a bolo on our porch. I gave a leap, landing on the porch beside him and at the same time hitting him in the stomach with my fist, knocking him off the porch.

My cot was very near the door, and I grabbed my rifle, which was loaded. There were four natives in my shack, killing Private Vobayda. When they saw me they tried to jump out through a hole in the back of the shack. I shot one, and he fell through this hole and over Private Swanson, who had followed me to the shack and gone around to the rear.

The native whom I had knocked off the porch was still standing near the shack and not more than ten or 15 feet away, so I shot him first. As I reloaded, Corporal Irish fell at the steps exhausted. I helped him up the stairs and told him to get his rifle and joi me, which he did.

I then saw a native standing near th flagpole with a cartridge belt in his hand and shot him also. Swanson, Irish, and I then crossed the plaza to the main barracks, firing at natives i front of us. I saw Private DeGraffenried defending himself with rocks and fired in to the crowd attacking him, killing one, and the rest ran. We continued firing and got all but one. We were then joined by Sergeant Betron, Corporal Burke, and one or two others and made our way toward the officers' quarters.

lay the majority of my comrades, some cold in death, some slowly bleeding to death, and others crying for help.

I went around the north end of the quarters and heard a cry, "For God's sake, help me, Walt, I am dying." I found Shoemaker, a former schoolmate. We had enlisted together and were close friends. He lay there stabbed through the lungs and abdomen. I found a first aid package and bound up his wounds the best I could. Those who were able were to bring all the wounded to the front of the main quarters. I carried Shoemaker there also, then went in search of more. I found Wood, my bunkie and most particular friend, in the road at the south end of the quarters. He still lived, and I started to pick him up, but he threw his head back in my arms and said, "That's all," and died.

Leaving him there, I went back to where the wounded had been assembled. The survivors were holding a council as to what steps we had better take. We decided that, owing to the small force and the serious condition of most of our wounded, it would be best to abandon the town. The natives had neglected to make away with several barotas tied to a small dock. Perhaps they thought that after the first rush there would be no Americans left to use the boats.

We had decided to leave the town by means of these barotas, and we started to carry the wounded down to the dock. The natives, seeing what our intentions were, made a rush at us and, for a while it appeared that our time had come. However, by having those of the wounded who were able load our rifles, and by firing a magazine fire into the onrushing foe, we finally put them to flight, but not until we had killed a great number. About 180 dead natives were counted there the next day when the relief expedition arrived. Before leaving, we had made a careful search to find anyone who might be wounded. Musician Meyer and I upset a five-gallon can of coal oil and set fire to it in the convent, but the natives put the fire out after we got away. We also rendered useless all the rifles we were unable to take with us.

Of our 74 men, all well and hearty at 6:30 a.m., only 36 were now alive, and 30 of these were wounded, some seriously. We loaded most of the wounded men into the largest barota. Considine and I took Private Marak, wounded through the right arm; Private Shoemaker, wounded in lungs and abdomen; Private Buhrer, wounded in seven different places, all serious; and Private Armani, wounded in the abdomen and hand. We also took my native servant, who had put up as gallant a fight as he could.

I protested before leaving that my boat was overloaded, but was ordered to go ahead. In one of two small barotas were Markley and Swanson and in the other Wingo, Driscoll, and Powers. We had to maintain a steady fire upon the natives, for those who had obtained rifles were firing at us.

We at last shoved off, thanking God we were leaving, and thinking the worst of our troubles were over. But our troubles had hardly started. In leaving the bay, we had to round Capais Point, some four or five miles from Balangiga. Inside this point we had a calm sea, but on rounding the point the sea was choppy, wave after wave washing into the boats. By constant bailing, we managed to keep afloat. At five minutes to 12:00 (at least that is the time my watch stopped), a breaker hit the boat and swamped us. The outriggers of bamboo poles had given the boat enough buoyancy to keep

Statement of Sergeant Closson

I was seated at the south end of the mess table when the ringing of the bells and the yelling seemed to come together. I looked out and saw the natives coming toward us. I jumped up and ran to the back stairs to the large barracks, reaching them at the same time as the natives. I ran upstairs and into the annex, pushing my way through the natives, who did not try to bolo me, as they were crowding to get our guns. I seized a rifle, but someone grabbed me from behind. They were crowding so I could do nothing, and they pulled me down to the floor. Then all but three or four let go of me and went in search of rifles. I wrenched away and tried to get up, hitting at them with my fists and they at me with bolos. I thus received several wounds, the worst of which was a severe cut in the head over the left temple.

I was also stabbed with a stiletto. It entered behind my ear and came out in my throat, severing a nerve and depriving me of all control of one side of my face. I also had wounds on the top of my head, just above the left elbow and across the fingers of my left hand. I wrenched loose at last and got up. I found a stick that one of the natives had dropped and began fighting with that. A native came into the annex from the main quarters with a rifle and belt, and I knocked him down, grabbed the rifle and belt, and jumped from the window to the ground. As I struck the ground, two bolo men made for me. I struck one on the head with the rifle, which broke off at the small part of the stock. I did not know it was loaded when I hit him, but as I glanced at the broken stock I noticed it was cocked, so I took a chance on the other native, pointed it at him and fired, killing him. I reloaded the piece from the belt and started for the corner of the barracks. Some of the natives came running around the corner, and I turned down the magazine cut-off and pumped a magazine fire into them; those who were not hit ran away.

I then went around to the main door of the quarters, where I met Considine and Manire. One had a ball bat, the other a spade, and they were hitting at natives and trying to get into the quarters, the door being closed and held by natives inside. I fired once or twice through the door and the natives retreated upstairs. We forced the door open and followed them.

At the top of the stairs, I found another rifle, which I gave to Manire. I then found another, giving Considine the one I had been using, and we fired on all of the natives we saw. They were jumping from all the windows but few reached the ground alive, as some more of the boys had found rifles and were on the ground shooting them as they jumped. About fourteen or fifteen, seeing how things were going below, attempted to hide themselves in the orderly room, but we could see them through the cracks and killed every one of them. We then went downstairs and began firing on the natives on the plaza.

our heads out of the water. Those in the larger boat paddled to us and took Shoemaker and Considine out, thus lightening our load so that we floated better, but most of our bodies were still under water.

The men in the large boat told us they would land and unload and return for us, but they did not. (They later said they tried but the breakers near shore were too dangerous and they dared not land.) Thus, I was left about three miles from shore, with three badly wounded men and my servant, to the mercy of the waves. Every once in a while a wave would wash over, completely submerging us, and we had no means of propelling the boat, being under water as it was.

Words cannot express our state of mind with that tropical sun burning down on our heads, no water to drink, and the salt water causing excruciating pain as it soaked into our wounds. But God favored us with delirium, and I don't think any of us can tell all that happened that afternoon. About sundown I noticed that we were nearer shore than we had been at noon. I called the other boys' attention to this, thinking to encourage them by telling them the tide was slowly drifting us toward shore and we had a fighting chance yet.

About midnight we landed on some rocks, so weak we could hardly get out of the boat. The native boy and I pulled the boat up on the rocks as far as we could in our feeble condition. We then helped Armani and Buhrer to land. We were nearly dead from thirst, the two wounded men crying continuously for water. I had the boy climb a coconut tree and get us some coconuts, the milk from which gave us great relief. I then had the men lie down and try to get a little sleep, while I stood guard.

I know not how long I sat there awake, thinking over the events of the day and the prospects for the morrow, but there is a limit to human endurance and I had reached mine. I fought it off by walking and soaking my face in the sea, but finally gave in to fatigue.

When I awoke it was daylight. Imagine my distress when I looked out to sea about a mile and saw our boat floating. The tide which had saved our lives by landing us had gone out and taken from us our means of escape from a hostile shore. I woke my comrades and called their attention to our deplorable condition. When Armani and Buhrer saw the boat and realized our condition, they both gave up and begged me to kill them. But I finally got them calmed down.

We decided that we would walk up the beach, thinking no doubt that we would sooner or later run across a barota. Armani was able to walk, but it was necessary for me to carry Buhrer. We wandered along like this for a mile or more, finally coming to some huge boulders. We had to climb over these, which we did after a great deal of effort. Buhrer being now unable to help himself at all, and Armani but little better, both refused to go farther after getting over those rocks. We offered to carry them, but they both gave up and we could not induce them to go farther. So I hid them back among the rocks where they could be seen only from the waterfront and told them we would proceed to find a boat and return for them.

We followed the beach by walking and swimming and got about half a mile up the beach when I heard an awful yell. I turned around and to my horror saw a band of bolo men attacking my comrades. They must have been watching us and waiting for a chance to ambush us. I raised my sight and emptied my magazine into them, but they took cover.

Fearing they would head us off before we could reach a boat, and knowing our comrades were past all help, the three of us who were left hurried on up the beach. We hiked about four miles before we discovered a boat. A big husky native stood near it and saw us coming, but evidently did not see my rifle at first, because he reached into the boat and pulled out a big bolo. I did not stand on ceremony, but let drive and, taking possession of the boat, we shoved off.

This boat was in very unseaworthy condition, a large hole in one end being plugged up with a coconut husk. For paddles we had two sticks, which the native boy and I used to the best of our ability. We had gone about 200 yards from shore when the band of bolo men reached the dead native on shore. They leaped into the water and started swimming toward us, but I made this very discouraging by firing at several heads and had the satisfaction of seeing each disappear.

We proceeded along in this way for several hours, making little headway. Marak, whose arm by this time was swollen to twice its normal size, was in agony and begged me to shoot him. I had about given up hope myself when I saw a column of smoke and called his attention to it. I don't think we took our eyes off it from that time on. It came from a steamer of some kind—but was it coming our way? Would it come close enough for someone to see us? Or would it pass us by thinking we were natives? As we watched, the boat got larger. It *was* coming our way, and, thank God, they had sighted us. In about 30 minutes, which seemed as many hours, they reached us. It proved to be the launch *Pittsburg* with all of the survivors who were able to return, together with G Company, 9th Infantry.

While we were slowly drifting toward shore the day before, the large boat had proceeded toward Basey, 30 miles north of Balangiga, and had arrived just before dawn. The suffering of these men was awful. The two most badly wounded had died en route and one of the small boats had disappeared not long after my boat was swamped. Nothing has ever been heard of the men aboard it. We arrived at Balangiga that afternoon, and after firing several volleys from the deck of the boat, we landed.

We found that the natives had mutilated our dead, stripped all the bodies of their clothing, and had even killed our dog and poked his eyes out.

We picked up 36 of our dead comrades and buried them side by side in one long trench. Three volleys were fired and taps blown. I have never since that day heard taps sounded that my mind did not recall that trench and have an indescribable feeling come over me.

Out of our garrison of 74 men, we buried 36 at Balangiga, two disappeared at Balangiga whose bodies were never recovered, two died enroute, three were killed and two missing en route to Basey, and three died later at Basey, leaving 26 survivors. Thus closes the bloodiest chapter of our war in the Philippines.